

P 301108Z OCT 08
FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6408
INFO SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE PRIORITY

UNCLAS LUSAKA 001052

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: ZAMBIA ELECTION DAY REPORT #1: QUIET START, LOW
TURNOUT

REF: A. LUSAKA 1050

[B](#). LUSAKA 1049

[C](#). LUSAKA 1048

[D](#). LUSAKA 1044 AND PREVIOUS

[1](#). As of noon local time, press reports and reporting from U.S. Embassy teams in the field indicate that polling stations around Zambia opened on time and in an orderly fashion. Observers teams have reported that the lines of voters waiting for polling stations to open quickly dissipated, and most stations that observers were visiting by mid-day were almost empty of voters. The streets of Lusaka are almost eerily quiet, with very little vehicular or pedestrian traffic.

[2](#). Embassy teams have said that the polling stations under observation have been relatively well-organized and prepared to conduct business. Voters who appear without their National Registration Card (NRC) are not being allowed to vote, which is in accordance with the law. Patriotic Front (PF) vice president Guy Scott complained on a local Lusaka radio station that voters who applied for replacement voter cards and were supposed to be able to pick them up at their polling stations were being turned away.

[3](#). Media outlets have reported that turnout so far is lower than in 2006 in areas such as Lusaka, Solwezi in the Northwest mining area and Livingstone. The general consensus is that low voter numbers favor the ruling Movement for Multiparty Democracy and its candidate, Rupiah Banda. Post will continue to monitor media and observer team reports for possible issues.

BOOTH